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ABSTRACT

An attempt to build on oral language programs--such as the language experience approach--by adding a written language component and a phonics component, to make transition to reading more meaningful and reading skill development more systematic, was undertaken in the study described here. The program, called DIREKT, was conducted by two kindergarten teachers and included two stages. The first involved activities related to auditory and visual memory and discrimination; left-to-right progression; labelling; rhyming; matching and sequencing of words, phrases, and sentences; and word and sentence rearranging. Stage two was designed for more formal and direct instruction using reading charts, practice on closure skills, introduction of letter sounds, and word banks. The program was considered a success, with the children in the two experimental classrooms scoring at the 72 percentile and the 68 percentile on the Comprehensive Tests of Basic Skills (CTBS) Reading Test at the end of the school year. Support materials, including a classroom activity schedule, lesson sequences, and a skills checklist, accompany the report. (LJR)

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DIRECT INSTRUCTION OF READING EXPERIENCES IN "K"INDERGARTEN AS A TRANSITION

This session will include:

Planning Reading Sequences to Maximize Reading Success in Kindergarten and First Grade

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Abstract for Session
Miami Beach, May 2-6, 1977

Submitted by Dr. Faye B. Haisley
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ABSTRACT

Title: Planning Reading Sequences to Maximize Reading Success in Kindergarten and First Grade

Introduction: Most of the teaching used to convince the kindergarten child that reading is useful, interesting and a desirable skill to acquire must appear to be "incidental." To achieve this atmosphere for learning to read the teacher must: know the sequences of activities to be developed within the framework of her total program which reinforce reading development; know the hierarchy of reading skills he/she desires to teach; be able to relate the pace of the presentation of the reading sequence to the students' instructional needs; and provide manipulative language experiences for the students to give them "power" rather than "failure" in manipulating and translating sound/symbol relationships.

Objectives of this Session will be to:

1. Provide a systematic overview and rationale for the reading procedure used successfully over a three-year period in kindergarten classrooms.
2. Provide support for the integration of a language-based phonic approach to reading.
3. Share some of the ideas and excitement generated by teachers when there exists a combination of individualized instructional programming and learner success in reading achievement.
4. Provide data on students' reading performance.

The Program Content will include:

1. The rationale for the program and its development.
2. Instruments for teacher screening for reading "readiness."
3. Descriptions of classroom language and reading sequences to show systematic skill progression.
4. Examples of individualized and group lesson procedures.
5. Descriptions of additional reading games and activities designed to reinforce and extend reading skills.
6. Examples of students' individual and group experience stories and charts and sight word skills.

Methods of Presentation:

1. Using overhead transparencies Dr. Haisley will present:
   a. an introduction to the session
   b. the rationale for the program
   c. a description of the program
2. A slide presentation by Mrs. Perino will:
   a. show the kindergarten students as they proceed through the developmental sequence of activities and skills in the program and
   b. describe several of the successful classroom activities.
3. Dr. Haisley will conclude with criterion and norm referenced data on student performance.

DIRECT INSTRUCTION of READING EXPERIENCES in KINDERGARTEN as a TRANSITION

INTRODUCTION

The use of language manipulation or experiences as a transition process to introduce reading activities has achieved wide acceptance and varying success by teachers interested in the development of self-directed learners. Bortnick (1975) defined language experiences in reading as a process of reconstruct~~ion~~ing oral language that has been written. Hall (1965) indicated that exposure to the Language Experience approach may stimulate curiosity about words and develop personal motivation for reading and that it had positive possibilities as a reading readiness approach to beginning reading.

A major criticism of the Language Experience approach to reading has been directed toward an over-emphasis on an unsystematic process and less on systematic skill development. The developmental program under discussion, DIREKT, attempts to use language manipulation to focus on process in combination with direct teaching of phonic skills.

Venezky (1974) indicates that the research evidence points to direct instruction and in pre-reading should be based on efficiency. He notes also that activities should proceed from easy to difficult and from concrete to abstract. A direct instruction teaching mode contains the following general procedures: teach all prerequisite skills the child needs to perform the task; introduce skills in an order that will insure success; demonstrate each skill in a clear and consistent fashion; and provide practice on each skill until the child reaches mastery. The question then arises as to the nature of prerequisite reading skills, the order for success and the amount of practice required on an individualized basis.

Venezky (1974) proposes that all rational approaches to reading instruction include both sight-word learning and letter-sound learning with its concomitant

reliance on sound blending. At a minimum his research on decoding indicates the need for attention to letter differentiation, association of a sound with a letter, and the blending of sounds to produce a word. He makes the important point that "the letters of the alphabet are the first objects for which the child must attend to orientation in labeling and that words are the first objects for which order is significant."

PROGRAM RATIONALE

During student teaching supervision in 1973-74 at the Canolino Early Childhood Learning Center observations of teaching procedures related to the rote learning of letters of the alphabet became a concern. Discussion with some of the staff centered on an alternative procedure - to build on the well developed oral language program - by adding a written language and a phonics component to make transition to reading more meaningful and reading skill development more systematic.

The rote learning of letter names as a reading readiness procedure became popular after a revival of interest in linguistic approaches in the mid 1960's. Fries and Bloomfield suggested that beginning readers should start out with instant automatic recognition of the letter-phoneme relationship of letters of the alphabet (Durkin, 1968).

Chall's (1967) classic study which provided an overview of reading research data, indicated that letter knowledge was an important predictor of reading achievement in first and second grades. Teachers and administrators under fire for lack of student reading achievement quickly adopted programs with a heavy emphasis on knowledge of the alphabet. Unfortunately, Chall's information was translated to indicate the need for rote learning of the alphabet without regard to her speculation that letter knowledge alone was

not the predictor but that "an early knowledge of, and interest in, letters may mark a new step in the child's intellectural development . . . and that when the child engages in symbolic representation he is already practicing a higher form of intellectual behavior."

PROGRAM HYPOTHESES

Two kindergarten teachers agreed to introduce a modified directed language and phonic approach to reading. One hypothesis was that the approach would not only provide knowledge of word and sentence meaning but also letter sounds and blending skills. A second hypothesis was that students so instructed would not only score at a higher level than their peers on the reading achievement tests but would also have developed a sequence of reading skills which would provide for greater generalization to independent decoding and individualized reading in first grade.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

In designing the program heavy initial emphasis (Sept.-Jan., 1974-75) was placed on developing oral language skills and activities. The program included activities related to: auditory and visual memory and discrimination; left to right progression; labelling; rhyming; matching and sequencing of words, phrases and sentences, and word and sentence rearranging. Use of Ginn Language Experience, Bowmar Nursery Rhymes and Children's Songs, and Peabody Kits were recommended, supported by individual and group dictation of experience stories and charts. Stage two was designed for more formal and direct instruction using reading charts, practice on closure skills, introduction of letter sounds, introduction of word families, and word banks. Independent and group activities were continued for student dictation.

Teachers were asked to note "checkpoints" in student understanding which might provide knowledge of stages of progress through the reading process and to document the amount of practice required before moving on to the more difficult skills. A copy of the general procedure for the initial program has been included in this package.

PROGRAM EVALUATION

The program proved to be very successful. Students in the two experimental classrooms scored on average at the 72 percentile and the 68 percentile respectively on the C.T.B.S. Reading Test in May, 1975. Eight other classes in the Learning Center who maintained the rote learning pattern with no additional sequentially developed reading procedure scored on average at the 52 percentile.

One exceptional teacher remains committed to the procedures and has developed additional refinements in the past two years. Her classroom provides an exciting opportunity for learning. Several other teachers in the center have adopted many of the procedures voluntarily. Some examples of individualized and group lesson procedures are also included in the package.

The slide presentation which follows will provide a brief overview of some of the activities that have been developed.

REFERENCES:

Chall, Jeanne S., Learning to Read: The Great Debate, McGraw-Hill, New York, 1967.

Durkin, Dolores, Phonics and the Teaching of Reading, Teachers College Press, New York, 1968.

Hall, Mary Anne, "The Development and Evaluation of a Language Experience Approach to Reading with First-Grade Culturally Disadvantaged Children," Encyclopaedia Britannica Educational Corporation, Chicago, Ill., 1970.

Venezky, Richard L., Pre-Reading Skills: Theoretical Foundations and Practical Applications, Wisconsin Research and Development Center for Cognitive Learning, Madison, Wisconsin, 1975.

SPECIFIC CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

The following pages were provided by the "exceptional" teacher mentioned in the program evaluation section, Mrs. Maggie Conway.

They will provide the practical ideas to make the program a possibility for other teachers.

CONTENTS

	Page
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SUGGESTED MONTHLY LANGUAGE ACTIVITIES

SEPTEMBER

retell stories on flannel board

1. teacher-created stories
2. child-created stories

OCTOBER

discussion - with picture or object and without

1. children dictate sentence--teacher make, with classroom, sentence maker--child "read"
2. children duplicate sentence previously dictated--match words and sequence of words using classroom sentence-maker

NOVEMBER

nursery rhymes and children's songs

1. children clap in rhythm to rhyme
2. children note rhyming words--add own words that rhyme

DECEMBER

children's songs--art prints only

1. children dictate story--several sentences
2. rearrange sentences to match story
3. choose sentence--make into sentence stand with "My Sentence Maker"

JANUARY

formal introduction of letters and sounds (not in Breakthrough)

FEBRUARY

after introduction of 4 consonants and 1 short vowel (a) children blend consonant-vowel-consonant pattern words.

1. make sentences with My Sentence Maker, using sight words and consonant-vowel-consonant words

MARCH

continue introducing consonants

1. children make sentences with My Sentence Maker, using sight words and c-v-c words.
2. teacher copies child's sentence into My Reading Book--child read own and illustrates.

APRIL

continue introducing consonants, making sentences, teacher copy into child's book.

1. child reads own sentences and illustrates
2. child reads other's sentences

MAY

finish introducing consonants

1. child makes dictionary of sight words known and c-v-c words.
2. child writes story books using dictionary--teacher may still take dictation for some.

JUNE

State testing

SAMPLE WEEKLY OUTLINE OF SPECIFIC LANGUAGE SKILLS

Week		Skills
September		
1	Behavior-routine of kindergarten day	
2	Chart	visual discrimination
	*"read" left to right	pictures
3	retell story	match
	dictate sentences	sentences 1. to picture 2. to chart
October		
4	sight word - a	match words
5	sight word - and	≠ match similar words
6	review a - and	visual memory
7	a and a	objects, colors words
November (listen for details and information		
8	a - and ~~q~~ the	≠ Visual memory words
9	children dictate class chart sight words I see	match spoken words to picture
10	class write chart I see	auditory discrimination gross sounds
11	review	rhyming
12	sight word the class write chart	rhyming match beginning sounds
December		
13	class write chart sight word the	sequence
14	Christmas activities	sequence
January		
15	class write chart using sight words: I see a, the, and	≠ match beginning sounds middle sounds end
16	class write chart review sight words	sound/symbol S

Here is a real checkpoint--evaluate readiness for sound/symbol based on:

1. previous checkpoints performance
2. teacher observation of learning rate
3. general background and emotional readiness of child

fast
medium
slow

Those ready - go on

Those not ready - go back to last successful checkpoint

Groups really begin to work on widely varying material.

January to June

Introduce 4 consonants, ă (I like 4 because it gives us more words)

≠ Blend to make words C-V-C

Continue with rest of consonants

Sight words: Introduce with each consonant:

rebus action word which becomes sight word for some

is i.e. swim w/s

on Combine with sight hop w/h, etc.

Words already known to read and act out sentences.

* means - do continuously throughout year

≠ means - checkpoint

SAMPLE LESSON SEQUENCE - 1st Semester

I. Model language patterns

Nursery Rhyme

Day 1

Present illustration, discuss — large chart with text
Repeat rhyme with teacher — of rhyme also

Day 2

Clap in rhythm to rhyme — text of rhyme also
memorize rhyme

Day 3

Match sentence strips to sentences
on large chart of rhyme (text)

Day 4

Read and arrange sentence strips in
order of rhyme. Discuss beginning
and end of sentence.

Day 5

Match cut-up words to sentences of
rhyme. Emphasize work from left to
right beginning to end of sentence.

We first give children language model then ask them to create.
See second sequence.

II. Create Language

Story

Day 1

Listen to story with illustration
Discuss--no text

Day 2

Children retell story with smaller
pictures putting small pictures in sequence.

Day 3

Children dictate sentence for sequenced small
pictures.

Day 4

Read previous day's sentences
match to pictures

Day 5

Match cut-up words to sentences previously dictated.

Variation

Later - after some practice with above:

1. Present illustration only--have children make up story.

2. Make smaller pictures--1 for each sentence.

3-5. Continue as above.

SAMPLE LESSON SEQUENCE - 2nd Semester

I. Blending (after 3-4 - s, m, f consonants and short a)

Day 1

Review consonants and vowel - sounds
Be sure of firm response - s=s/s no hisitation

Day 2

Blend consonant - vowel s - a = sa
Blend vowel-consonant a - t = at

Day 3

Blend consonant-vowel-consonant
slowly at first with increasing speed to get word-hand signals helpful.

Day 4

Practice blending c-v-c. Read sentences with combination of sight words and decoded words. Explain difference.

Day 5

Read sentence as on day 4. Child illustrate to assure comprehension. i.e.

Capital form. Sam is fat.

Same as lower case. Sam sat on the mat.

Underlined words are "memory" words, others are to be decoded.

After children understand the blending process and have some facility with it they can continue to practice as new consonants are introduced. Then a weekly outline becomes:

II.

Day 1

Introduce new consonant sound (n)

Day 2

Practice and review new consonant (n)

Day 3

Blend new consonant with vowel:
n - a = na a - n = an

Day 4

Blend new consonant-vowel-consonant
n - a - t, m - a - n, f - a - n
These words now are added to child's "Sentence Maker" for building sentences.

Day 5

Read sentences with sight words and blended words--decode both old and new consonants. Illustrate for comprehension

The man is fat.

Teacher writes text for 4-5 page "books" for groups. Children illustrate, predict ending (this involves their own language and relieves the monotany of word families). These "books" then become part of the library for other children to read. This way we're practicing skills without tedious drill. It's fun!

CHECKLIST OF SKILLS THAT STUDENTS CAN PERFORM
(These could be developed into a continuum of skills)

September

Child can:

- Retell story that has just been told or read
- Create own story
- Speak in complete sentences
- Visually discriminate and match pictures

October

Child can:

- Participate in discussion
- Describe object or picture
- "Read" left to right
- Listen for and recall details and information
- Visually discriminate and match words
- Do visual memory activities:
  - Recall sequence of objects, pictures, letters
  - Demonstrate understanding of word space

November

Child can:

- Recognize spoken word as unit
- Hear and match rhyming words
- Imitate sounds
- Identify sounds
- Recall and repeat sounds in sequence
- Hear and match beginning sounds in words

December

Child can:

- Recall pictures in sequence
- Match sentences and arrange in sequence
- Duplicate sentence putting words in sequence
- Understand and use terms - first, next, last

January

Child can:

- Use and understand words beginning, middle, end in relation to sounds in words and position of letters in words.
- Hear, match and identify sound/symbol relationships
  1. in spoken words
  2. in written words
- Give name, sound and word for letter (3 this month--all consonants)

February

Child can:

Give name sound and word for letter (2 consonants and 1 vowel - short a this month)
Decode consonant-vowel-consonant pattern words
Compose and read own sentences

March

Child can:

Give name, sound and word for letter (4 consonants this month)
Decode consonant-vowel-consonant pattern words
Compose and read own sentences
Display comprehension of sentences read (by illustrations)

April

Child can:

Give name, sound and word for letter (4 consonants this month)
Decode c-v-c words
Read sentences not his/her own

May

Child can:

Give name sound and word for letter (4 consonants this month)
Decode c-v-c words
Arrange words in alphabetical order
Create stories
Use period and question mark
Use capital letter for beginning of sentence.

June

State testing

NOTE FROM TEACHER: (I have not made any mention of writing in this list. We use a specific hand writing system in our district which prohibits the children from advancing on their own in this area. I teach the formation of each letter at the same time I introduce sound and name of letter.

Children not tied to this type of system could begin writing thie own stories earlier, I believe.)

WEEKLY SCHEDULE - MRS. CONWAY C-6

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
8:30-8:45	OPENING - MUSIC, POETRY TALK TIME AFFECTIVE CONCERNS FLAG SALUTE - ROLL	→	→	→	→
8:45-9:00	SOCIAL STUDIES INTRODUCE THEME UNIT	ORAL LANGUAGE - LISTENING - DISCUSSION SKILLS →	→	→	→
9:00-9:15	READINESS GROUPING →	→	→	→	→
9:15-9:30	MATH READINESS GROUPING SMALL MOTOR GROUPING →	→	→	→	→
9:30-10:15	←	NUTRITION - RECESS - REST →	→	→	→
10:15-10:45	GROUPING - AS ABOVE →	→	→	→	→
10:45-11:15	GROSS MOTOR - CHOOSING TIME - CHOICE OF ACTIVITIES - GROSS MOTOR →	→	→	→	→
11:15-11:30	STORY TIME - FILMS →	→	→	→	→